

Message Text

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ACTION SCS-03

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 SCA-01 DHA-02 L-03 H-01
NSC-05 SS-15 SNM-02 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 NSCE-00 SSO-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 /050 W
-----211959Z 125954 /73

O 211900Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 1765
AMCONSUL RECIFE NIACT IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L BRASILIA 4123

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CASC, PFOR
SUBJ: W/W - ARREST: (CAPUANO, THOMAS AND ROSEBAUGH, LAWRENCE)

REF: (A) BRASILIA 4092 (B) BRASILIA 4080 (C) BRASILIA 4061
(D) BRASILIA 4062 (E) BRASILIA 4079

1. DETENTION OF THOMAS CAPUANO AND LAWRENCE ROSEBAUGH WAS REPORTED MAY 21 IN ALL MAJOR BRAZILIAN NEWSPAPERS AND HAS BEEN THE SUBJECT OF WASHINGTON POST QUERY. IN RECIFE ITSELF, STORY APPEARED ON FRONT PAGE OF ONE PAPER AND FIFTH PAGE OF ANOTHER. ONE BRASILIA PAPER PRINTED A FRONT PAGE TEASER WITH INSIDE STORY. ELSEWHERE, ARTICLES WERE GENERALLY SMALL OR MEDIUM-SIZE INSIDE PAGE PIECES, CLOSELY BASED UPON 10-LINE NOTICE WHICH APPEARED MAY 20 IN BULLETIN OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF OLINDA AND RECIFE. NOTICE REPORTED THAT ROSEBAUGH AND CAPUANO WERE CONFRONTED BY TWO POLICE-MEN MAY 15 WHILE PUSHING A CART CONTAINING VEGETABLES FOR THE POOR. AFTER INSPECTING THE TWO MEN'S DOCUMENTS, POLICE REPORTEDLY DECLARED THE REGISTRATION AND LICENSING OF THE CART TO BE IMPROPER, AND TOOK CAPUANO AND ROSEBAUGH HANDCUFFED TO THE POLICE STATION FOR ROBBERIES AND THEFTS, LEAVING THE CART BEHIND. "THUS BEGAN," CONCLUDED THE NOTICE, "A NIGHTMARE OF THREE DAYS' DURATION, REplete WITH EVERY SPECIES OF INDIGNITY, TO WHICH
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ALL THOSE CONSIDERED "MARGINALS" BY THE POLICE ARE SUBJECTED."

2. O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO AND JORNAL DE BRASILIA FURTHER REPORTED REMARKS OF LOCAL BISHOP (ASSISTANT TO ARCHBISHOP DOM HELDER CAMARA), WHO LAMENTED THE MORE SERIOUS FACT THAT SUCH MISTREATMENT IS THE NORMAL SITUATION FOR PRISONERS IN THAT POLICE STATION. BISHOP STATED THAT ROSEBAUGH HAD VISITED THE

AMERICAN CONSULATE TO REPORT THE INCIDENT.

3. O ESTADO AND O GLOBO ALSO REPORTED COMMENTS OF POLICE STATION CHIEF, WHO DENIED KNOWLEDGE OF ARRESTS OF ANY PRIESTS, BUT STATED THAT EARLIER THAT WEEK, TWO AMERICANS WHO WERE WITH A GROUP OF MARIJUANA USERS WERE ARRESTED AND SPENT A NIGHT IN JAIL BEFORE BEING EXONERATED AND RELEASED.

4. IN ABSENCE OF STATE SECRETARY FOR PUBLIC SECURITY AND HIS DEPUTY (BOTH AWAY FOR WEEKEND), CONSUL HOFFENBURG IS SEEKING APPOINTMENT TODAY (MAY 21) WITH NEXT IN COMMAND OF STATE POLICE, TO DELIVER ORAL PROTEST. IN ADDITION, APPOINTMENT WITH STATE SECRETARY HAS BEEN ARRANGED FOR MAY 23 AT 1600 HOURS, AT WHICH POINT CONSUL WILL REPEAT THAT PROTEST. CONSUL WILL BE MEETING WITH STATE GOVERNOR MORNING OF MAY 24, AT WHICH TIME GOVERNOR WILL BE INFORMED OF ORAL PROTEST TO STATE SECRETARY. CONSUL'S CONTACTS WITHIN FOURTH ARMY HAVE CONFIRMED PREVIOUS IMPRESSION THAT IT WAS ARMY'S INTERVENTION WITH POLICE WHICH EFFECTED PROMPT RELEASE OF PRISONERS. ACCORDINGLY, CONSUL, FOLLOWING MEETING WITH STATE SECRETARY ON MAY 23, WILL USE WORKING CHANNELS ALREADY ESTABLISHED WITH ARMY ON THIS CASE, TO CONVEY THE NEWS OF HIS PROTEST TO STATE SECRETARY. CONTRARY TO EARLIER GUIDANCE, THIS MATTER WILL NOT REPEAT NOT BE RAISED DIRECTLY WITH FOURTH ARMY COMMANDER. ALL APPROACHES OUTLINED IN THIS PARAGRAPH WILL FOLLOW GUIDANCE SET FORTH IN REFTEL A.

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5. CONSUL REPORTS THAT WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT HAS MADE A VERY GENERAL INQUIRY TO HIM ABOUT THE CASE.

6. IF WE RECEIVE FURTHER INQUIRIES SPECIFICALLY ABOUT ROSEBAUGH AND CAPUANO FROM THE BRAZILIAN OR U.S. PRESS -- AND ONLY IF WE DO SO-- WE PLAN TO DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING AS APPROPRIATE TO THE INDIVIDUAL QUESTION.

(A) WITH REGARD TO LAWRENCE (LOURENCO) ROSEBAUGH AND THOMAS (TOMAS) CAPUANO:

THE EMBASSY CAN CONFIRM THAT BOTH ARE AMERICAN CITIZENS. ROSEBAUGH IS A CATHOLIC PRIEST AND CAPUANO IS A MENNONITE MISSIONARY. SINCE ALL SUCH CASES ARE MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE AND DEEP CONCERN TO THE U.S. GOVERNMENT, THE CONSULATE IS INVESTIGATING THE MATTER AND GATHERING INFORMATION URGENTLY. THE INFORMATION THE CONSULATE AND THE EMBASSY HAVE RECEIVED SO FAR CONCERNING THIER CASES IS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME AS THAT REPORTED BY THE NEWSPAPER OF THE

ARCHDIOCESE OF OLINDA AND RECIFE.

(B) THE U.S. CONSUL IN RECIFE, MARVIN HOFFENBERG, HAS TALKED TO THE TWO CLERGYMEN, AND IS TAKING THE MATTER UP WITH THE SECURITY AUTHORITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE STATE OF PERNAMBUCO. THE EMBASSY IS AWAITING FURTHER DETAILS IN A REPORT EXPECTED FROM THE CONSUL.

(C) ANY FURTHER STEPS TO BE TAKEN BY THE EMBASSY WILL DEPEND ON THE CONSUL'S REPORT, FOLLOWING HIS CONVERSATIONS WITH THE PERNAMBUCO STATE SECURITY AUTHORITIES.

(D) THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPH IS FOR USE IN ANSWERING QUESTIONS ABOUT WHETHER THE EMBASSY PLANS TO MAKE A FORMAL PROTEST TO THE GOB.

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(E) QUESTIONS ABOUT MISTREATMENT OF THE AMERICAN PRISONERS ARE TO BE ANSWERED: OUR INFORMATION SO FAR IS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME AS THAT REPORTED BY THE ARCHDIOCESE NEWSPAPER.

(F) IF ASKED IF THIS CASE IS "ANOTHER MORRIS CASE," WE PLAN TO REPLY THAT, ON THE BASIS OF OUR PRESENT INFORMATION, THERE APPEAR TO BE SUBSTANTIAL DIFFERENCES, ALTHOUGH NATURALLY WE ARE NOT PREPARED TO GO INTO DETAILS.

(G) IF ASKED IF THIS CASE WILL AFFECT MRS. CARTER'S VISIT, WE PLAN TO ANSWER THAT THE QUERY IS PURELY HYPOTHETICAL AND THAT, AS REPORTERS KNOW, THE EMBASSY NEVER ANSWERS HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS.

7. DCM IS CONTACTING CHIEF OF FONMIN'S AMERICAS DEPARTMENT TODAY TO INFORM HIM OF FACT OF CASE AND OF OUR APPROACH TO PERNAMBUCO AUTHORITIES, AND TO INDICATE THE RESPONSES EMBASSY WILL GIVE IF QUESTIONED BY PRESS IN THE MATTER.

8. DEPARTMENT IS AWARE THAT CARDINAL PAULO EVARISTO ARNS, ARCHBISHOP OF SAO PAULO, WILL RECEIVE HONORARY DEGREE FROM NOTRE DAME UNIVERSITY MAY 22, IN RECOGNITION OF HIS WORK IN DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS. PRESIDENT CARTER WILL, OF COURSE, ALSO BE PRESENT TO RECEIVE HONORARY DEGREE AND MAKE ADDRESS. POSSIBILITY EXISTS THAT ARNS WILL HAVE BEEN INFORMED OF THIS CASE AND WILL MENTION IT TO PRESIDENT. CRIMMINS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PRESS COMMENTS, ARRESTS, PRISONERS WELFARE, RELIGIOUS LEADERS
Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 21-May-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BRASIL04123
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770182-0375
Format: TEL
From: BRASILIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770532/aaaabbnd.tel
Line Count: 167
Litigation Code IDs:
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Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 BRASILIA 4092, 77 BRASILIA 4080, 77 BRASILIA 4061, 77 BRASILIA 4062, 77 BRASILIA 4079
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27-Jun-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2424377
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: W/W - ARREST: (CAPUANO, THOMAS AND ROSEBAUGH, LAWRENCE)
TAGS: CASC, PFOR, SOPN, (CAPUANO, THOMAS), (ROSEBAUGH, LAWRENCE)
To: STATE RECIFE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/a1f0c58c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009